

I think it is absolutely correct to look around the world and say what can we do to help improve human rights, to help improve labor standards, to help make sure that the entire globe protects the environment. And I think these issues need to be brought up more often in international discussions, not just involving trade, but in all discussions with other countries.

Mr. Speaker, what can we do to help improve those things? I rise today just to remind people that even though those issues are important, we cannot forget the importance of open markets. It starts with the simple fact that 96 percent of the people in the world live someplace other than the United States of America, while at the same time, here in the U.S., we manage to account for 20 percent of the world's consumption.

If we are going to grow economically, if we are going to create more jobs, those statistics make it abundantly clear that we are going to have to get access to some of those other 96 percent of the people in the world.

We need to get access to their markets. We need to reduce barriers, open access to trade to help grow the economy. And I do not think people understand completely the benefits that trade have brought and the role they have played in the strong economy that we now enjoy.

I just think that while we are working to improve labor conditions, working to improve human rights and environment, we can also open up other markets to our trade. And the best example of this, and I support the comments of the gentleman from California (Mr. DOOLEY), my colleague who came before me, is the China PNTR trade agreement.

All of the concerns we have heard about trade in previous agreements, a lot of them focus on the fact that it is a one-sided trade agreement. We open our markets, but other countries do not open theirs. This is actually the first trade agreement that goes the other way. China opens their markets by reducing their barriers across the board in a wide variety of goods and services that will increase our access to the single largest market in the world, 1.3 billion people.

This is a great trade agreement that actually will help us here in the U.S., and we need to recognize it for that. We also need to recognize how engagement helps move us forward.

Mr. Speaker, turning down PNTR for China will not do one thing to improve human rights, labor conditions or environmental standards in China. In fact, if you listen to the human rights activists over there, and if you listened to people over in that corner of the world, isolating China will send them in exactly the opposite direction.

Taiwan, in particular, we have heard a lot about how we cannot support this

agreement, because of how bad China has treated Taiwan; and I agree that there have been many bad actions by China towards Taiwan. The Taiwanese, the recently elected president, an outspoken advocate for independence for Taiwan, someone who has run against China many, many times strongly supports the U.S. favoring PNTR for China, because he understands that engagement is the policy that will best protect him from Chinese aggression if they choose to go that route.

He wants China to be connected to the rest of the world so that they cannot afford to act in a way that forces the rest of the world to back away from them. So you can have a good trade agreement and also improve human rights, labor conditions, and the environment; but this argument goes beyond the specifics of the China Trade Agreement, even though I think it will be a watershed moment in this country to see whether or not we are going to go forward and embrace engagement and embrace overseas markets or drift back into a dangerous isolation that could push us into a bipolar world.

It is a basic philosophy of whether or not opening markets is open and beneficial. I think there is a lot of statistics out there that show that access to trade helps improve the economy across the board. This is not an isolated few who benefit from it. When we have an economy with 4 percent unemployment, 2 percent inflation, and growth as high as 6 or 7 percent, that benefits everybody in this country.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot lose sight of the importance of opening overseas markets to our goods. And it goes beyond economics. It is also a matter of national security. We should be concerned about the rest of the world, whether or not countries like Vietnam, Sub-Saharan Africa, other countries in the Third World grow and prosper. If they do not have access to our markets, their people will never be able to rise out of poverty. They will never be able to generate the type of economy that they need in order to have any level of prosperity whatsoever.

This is important for two reasons. One, if we can grow a vibrant middle class in places like Sub-Saharan Africa and beyond, they are in a position to buy our stuff and help our economy grow as well. If they are in poverty, we cannot get access to those markets because there is no one to buy.

Beyond economics, it is also important to keep the peace. If countries are impoverished, that is what leads to revolution and war. We have to help them grow up so that we can keep peace and stability in the world. Trade is important. Labor, human rights, environment, absolutely important. But let us not forget the importance of opening our markets for global stability and for a strong economy in the U.S.

INTRODUCTION OF THE HIGGINS GOLD MEDAL RESOLUTION

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JEFFERSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. JEFFERSON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce that I have introduced a resolution on behalf of the entire Louisiana delegation that will honor some long-forgotten and overlooked heroes of World War II.

These heroes were not soldiers or sailors or aviators. These silent heroes were hard-working men and women from Louisiana. However, according to President Dwight Eisenhower who served as Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces, the ingenuity and hard work of these unsung heroes played an enormous role in winning World War II.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation will award a Congressional Gold Medal to the late Andrew Jackson Higgins and another Congressional Gold Medal to his workforce of 20,000 at Higgins Industries in New Orleans, Louisiana. These medals will recognize their contribution to the Nation, to the Allied victory in World War II and to world peace.

Let me briefly explain why the late Mr. Higgins and the employees of Higgins Industries deserve this long-overdue recognition.

Andrew Jackson Higgins designed and engineered high-speed boats and various types of military landing craft, later to be known as "Higgins boats."

Higgins boats were constructed of wood and steel and transported fully armed troops, light tanks and other mechanized equipment essential to all Allied amphibious landing operations, including the decisive D-Day attack at Normandy, France.

Mr. Higgins also designed, engineered, and constructed four major assembly plants in New Orleans for mass production of Higgins landing craft and other vessels vital to the Allied forces' conduct of World War II.

Higgins Industries employed more than 20,000 workers at his eight plants in New Orleans. They worked around the clock over 4 years. At peak production, they built 700 boats per month. By the end of the war, they had built 20,094 landing craft of all types, and trained 30,000 Navy, Marine, and Coast Guard personnel on the proper operation of these boats.

The slogan at Higgins Industries was: "The guy who relaxes is helping the Axis."

Beyond his genius in the design and engineering of the "Higgins boats," Andrew Jackson Higgins possessed a foresight and a social conscience unheard of more than half a century ago.

Long before the United States had entered World War II, the late Mr. Higgins began to stockpile the materials needed to produce the thousands of landing craft and PT boats. His foresight contributed greatly to America's

readiness when it finally did enter the war.

For example, Higgins bought the entire 1940 Philippine mahogany crop, anticipating a need for a stockpile of wood to build landing craft when American entered the war.

Besides his foresight and ingenuity, Higgins instituted a progressive social policy at Higgins Industries, where he employed a fully integrated assembly workforce of black and white men and women. His policy was equal pay for equal work decades before integration and racial and gender equality became the law of our land.

Mr. Speaker, after review of Mr. Higgins' contributions and the output of Higgins Industries during the early years of World War II, it is easy to understand Eisenhower's admiration and praise. On Thanksgiving, 1944, then General Eisenhower reported home, "Let us thank God for Higgins Industries' management and labor which has given us the landing boats with which to conduct our campaign."

Then again in 1964, President Eisenhower said of Andrew Higgins: "He is the man who won the war for us. If Higgins had not produced and developed those landing craft, we never could have gone in over an open beach. We would have had to change the entire strategy of the war."

Mr. Speaker, the time has come for our Nation and this Congress to recognize Andrew Jackson Higgins and his employees for their unparalleled contributions to our country, to victory in World War II, and to world peace.

Indeed, this tribute is just in time for June 6, 2000, the 55th anniversary of the Allied landing at Normandy, when the National D-Day Museum will be dedicated and opened in New Orleans.

There are not adequate words to describe the vision and patriotism of Andrew Jackson Higgins and his employees. He understood what is needed to win World War II long before America was a participant, and he went beyond the call of duty to be prepared to serve his country. Then, his employees undertook the Herculean task of building the boats that won the war.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all of our colleagues to join me and award a Congressional Gold Medal to the late Andrew Jackson Higgins and a second Congressional Gold Medal to the employees of Higgins Industries. These forgotten heroes of World War II provided a decisive and essential contribution to the United States and the Allied victory in World War II, blacks and whites, men and women, working side by side, equal pay for equal work, building the boats that won the war.

Mr. Speaker, these silent heroes must be honored and should always be remembered and the award of a Congressional Gold Medal to them is highly in order at this time.

CONGRATULATING THE CHICAGO DAILY DEFENDER ON ITS 95TH ANNIVERSARY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise to extend congratulations to the Chicago Daily Defender newspaper on the celebration of its 95th year. The Chicago Defender was founded as a weekly newspaper on May 5, 1905 by Robert Sengstacke Abbott. His goal was to use the power of the press to address concerns of blacks worldwide, with special emphasis on the United States.

During Mr. Abbott's lifetime, the Chicago Defender amassed impressive achievements. Some examples are the Great Migration, the mass exodus of blacks from the South to the so-called promised land of the North; the first black publication to reach a circulation of 100,000; initiation of the Bud Billiken Parade, and much more.

Mr. Abbott formulated the following nine-point platform for his paper in 1905:

Racial prejudice worldwide must be destroyed;

Racially unrestricted membership in all unions;

Equal Employment Opportunities on all jobs, public and private;

True representation in all United States police forces;

Complete cessation of all school segregation;

Establishment of open occupancy in all American housing;

Federal intervention to protect civil rights in all instances where civil rights compliance at the State level breaks down;

Representation in the President's Cabinet;

Federal legislation to abolish lynching.

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Mr. Abbott passed in 1940. Upon his death, John Sengstacke, his nephew, took over operations of the newspaper. Despite the change, the achievements continued.

Under Mr. Sengstacke's leadership, the National Newspaper Publisher's Association, an organization of black newspaper publishers, was formed. This occurred despite skepticism about uniting the Black publishers into one organization.

Another accomplishment, despite belief that it would not work, was the conversion of the Chicago Defender from a weekly to a daily newspaper in 1956. Mr. Sengstacke was also instrumental in integrating the armed forces through several presidential administrations, integrating major league baseball, construction of the new Provident Hospital, and continuation of the Bud Billiken parade. Today the

parade is sponsored by the Chicago Defender Charities and is second in size only to the Tournament of Roses Parade.

In 1997, John Sengstacke passed, leaving behind Sengstacke Enterprises, which includes the Chicago Defender, the Michigan Chronicle in Detroit, the Pittsburgh Courier, and the Tri-State Defender in Memphis.

Today the Chicago Defender remains a significant force in journalism. Its importance is noted by the fact that only two points of the original nine-point platform have been removed. They are representation in the President's cabinet and Federal legislation to abolish lynching. The presence of the remaining seven points and their existence since 1905 is the principal guiding force of this publication as it moves forward.

This paper, Madam Speaker, was an inspiration to many, even to myself as I was a young boy growing up in rural Arkansas, where we used to wait for the pullman porters to bring copies of the Defender to our town. As a result of reading the Defender, it gave us contact with the outside world.

The Defender has been most fortunate to have outstanding journalists like Lou Palmer, Vernon Jarrett, Faith Christmas, Jennifer Strasburg, and countless others.

So as they celebrate their 95th year anniversary, I simply want to say to the Defender and all of its staff persons, continue the great legacy, continue the great work. They have been an inspiration, and they continue to be a bright star that shines.

CHICAGO DAILY DEFENDER COMMEMORATION

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MORELLA). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RUSH) is recognized for 5 minutes. Mr. RUSH. Madam Speaker, this evening I rise to pay special tribute to a publication of historic proportions in the city of Chicago.

Five years into the last century, the Chicago Defender created for itself a permanent place in the history of American journalism by becoming Chicago's most influential African American newspaper. Without fail, since 1905, the Daily Defender has provided news and information regarding African Americans and the Black Diaspora. In doing so, this newspaper fills an important void in Chicago's media because it tells the stories that much too often are not covered by other mainstream publications.

In the Defender's early years, its founder, Robert Sengstacke Abbott, realized several impressive achievements, including orchestrating the "Great Migration" campaign. This campaign brought about the mass exodus of African Americans from the racist South to the "promised land" of the north.